

MINUTES

TALBOT COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

3 February 2014

I. ROLL CALL

The regular monthly meeting of the Talbot County Historic Preservation Commission was called to order at 3:00 PM on Monday, 6 January 2014. Those members in attendance were Mr. Ward Bucher, Chair; Dr. Dorothy C. Fenwick, Mrs. Marsha Kacher, Mr. Ron Mitchell, Mr. Robert Amdur and Mr. Jacob Laureska. Ms. Alice Marie Gravely was absent. Representing the County was Mr. Martin Sokolich.

II. CURRENT BUSINESS

- A. REVIEW MINUTES OF THE 6 JANUARY 2014 MEETING – The minutes of the last meeting were read. A motion was made to approve the minutes as written. The motion was seconded and unanimously carried.
- B. COMMUNITY OUTREACH EFFORTS – Mr. Martin Sokolich reported that mailings requesting updated contact information have been sent to all of the owners of properties that currently have Talbot County Historic District Overlays (HDOs). To date, replies have been received from nine owners and the new information has been added to the list.
- C. HISTORIC PROPERTY SURVEY – Mr. Ward Bucher said a budget request has been sent to the Finance Department which includes \$4,500 for grant matching funds. It was discussed to break the County into smaller areas as a strategy to reduce the scope and cost of the survey. Mr. Ron Mitchell asked whether there are assumptions of how many historic properties are in each area and where they are located. A discussion ensued about survey logistics, strategy questions and setting priorities, such as new previously unsurveyed properties versus updating the information about properties on the existing list. Mr. Ward Bucher said he discussed the original survey with Michael Bourne who said that access to the various sites became available, in part, through Mrs. Polly Shanahan's participation. Dr. Dorothy Fenwick inquired whether there are areas endangered by development. Mr. Ward Bucher pondered what the rationale should be for the requested funding. It was discussed that the requested amount puts the budget back up to funding levels that existed prior to the economic downturn, and it is consistent with amounts used to match past grants. Mr. Ron Mitchell asked how much from the current budget could be used toward the survey project, and if there would be enough to contract for a feasibility study. After some discussion, a motion was made:

MOTION – Mr. Ron Mitchell moved to contract with Priscilla Morris or another qualified consultant to conduct a feasibility study for identifying potential historic districts, at a cost not to exceed \$1,000; the study to be completed by 30 June 2014. The motion was seconded by Dr. Dorothy Fenwick and it was unanimously carried.

- D. WEBER HOUSE (T-818) AND JENA (T-163) SITE VISIT REPORTS - Mr. Ward Bucher presented the Weber House site visit report, which was approved with the

following edits: Corrections in paragraph 3 are to read “The two-story gabled wood frame house is five bays wide on the front façade and has a cross-gable dormer with a small attic window.” “The primary siding material is cement asbestos shingles.” A correction to the caption in paragraph 4 is to read “View of the garage looking northeast.”

- E. ST. JOHN’S CHAPEL (T-49) AT THE ANCHORAGE (T-52) – To date, no further news regarding the environmentally endangered chapel was available for discussion.
- F. TCHPC VISIT TO THE TALBOT COUNTY HISTORIC SOCIETY ARCHIVES – This topic was not discussed as there was no further news from Ms. Alice Marie Gravely regarding the arrangements.

III. NEW BUSINESS

- A. WRIGHTS MILL HOUSE (T-126) – The property owner has requested information about the Talbot County Historic District Overlay program. Mr. Martin Sokolich said an application and background materials have been sent; however, to date, he has not received a reply. He will draft a follow-up letter for Mr. Ward Bucher’s signature.
- B. MEETING WITH LOCAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORGANIZATIONS – To date, no specific plans have been made. The topic was not discussed at today’s meeting since it is not a pressing priority at this time.
- C. NOMINATION FOR ENDANGERED HISTORIC RESOURCES: THE GARDNER HOUSE (Buffalo Soldier’s House) IN EASTON – Mr. Ron Mitchell reported that Historic Easton is working to nominate the Gardner House property which is owned by the Easton Housing Authority. Mr. Ward Bucher and Mr. Mitchell will be assisting in the nomination process.
- D. FREDERICK DOUGLASS MUSEUM - It was discussed that there is an opportunity for former TCHPC commissioner, Mr. Eric Lowery, and the Frederick Douglass Honor Society to collaborate with the Historical Society of Talbot County; however financial and staff cuts are making it difficult to plan.
- E. UPCOMING SITE VISITS – Mr. Robert Amdur said a site visit to the Oxford District Custom House (T-549) is scheduled for Monday, 10 February 2014. Those attending are to meet at the Easton Acme parking lot at 2:45 pm.

IV. OPEN FLOOR

- A. MILLER’S HOUSE (T-70) – Mr. Ward Bucher shared post-restoration renderings of the Miller’s House obtained from Historic Easton.
- B. PROPOSED WIRELESS COMMUNICATION TOWER ON MATTHEWSTOWN ROAD – Mr. Martin Sokolich reported on a balloon test that was conducted for a proposed wireless communication tower on Matthewstown Road. He said there was no

apparent visual impact on nearby historic resources. Another test is scheduled for 6 February at 8:00 am just outside of Cordova.

- C. OPEN MEETINGS CERTIFICATION TRAINING - Mr. Martin Sokolich said he will take online Open Meetings training for TCHPC. The Commissioners were also invited to log on for certification.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be on Monday, 3 March 2014, at 3:00 pm in Conference Room One of the Talbot County Office Building at 215 Bay Street in Easton.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 4:20 pm.

12 February 2014